

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday  
December 04, 2018**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joseph Pilieri, President  
Joseph Knowles, Vice President  
Ed Kisselback, Secretary  
Jesse Sloane, Member  
Ed Tokmajian, Member

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo  
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary  
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor  
John Chaykowski, Finance Manager  
Fred Harran, Director of Public Safety  
Jim Ryan, Director of Public Works  
Chuck McMullin, Director of Parks & Rec  
Bob Heil, Interim Director of Building & Planning  
Jim Bogan, Director of Operations, Bensalem Township Country Club

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**Council President Pilieri** opened the meeting with a moment of silence which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He then invited the **Mayor** to make Opening Remarks.

**Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo** then welcomed everyone and read the 2019 Budget Message into the record. The **Mayor** noted that the policies and practices of his administration have kept the financial position strong that the township was able to provide the residents and businesses with an unsurpassed quality of life and a full complete level of municipal services, all without any increase in the Township real estate taxes. In closing the **Mayor** thanked his staff for their hard work, support and dedication. The Mayor also thanked the member of the Township Council, past and present, who have given their support through the years.

2. **REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED 2019 BUDGET:**

**Council President Pilieri** asked the **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski** to introduce the department heads.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

The minutes are not verbatim but rather a synopsis of what transpired during the meeting, and while I do my best to attribute remarks and questions to the correct individual, there may be mistakes or omissions because of the “back and forth” dialogue and the **lack of the use of the microphones**.

**John Chaykowski** introduced the **Director of Public Safety**, and **Director Harran** took the podium.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Director Harran** gave a power point presentation utilizing charts and graphs to depict how the funds for the police department budget are allocated. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about the increase in salaries and if it was contractual and **Director Harran** indicated that they were contractual. **Director Harran** was asked to provide additional detail regarding the Minor Equipment line. **Council Secretary Kisselback** asked for clarification regarding the “Salaries-Educational Contract”. **Council Member Tokmajian** thanked all the Directors for their time and indicated that they spent several hours before the Budget Meeting going over their budgets for 2019 in which the Directors gave a better understanding of their line items. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked for clarification regarding the two new officers, if they were additional or replacements. **Director Harran** indicated that they were an addition to their staff. **Council Vice President Knowles** asked **Director Harran** to clarify the two additional officers. **Council President Pilieri** thanked **Director Harran** and the men and women of his department for putting their lives on the line and keeping the township safe.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

This department also falls under the command of **Director Harran** who indicated that the budget has remained the same. **Council Vice President Knowles** requested clarification regarding the department’s personnel. Council member Sloane asked for an explanation regarding the office supply line item and the minor and major equipment. **Council Secretary Kisselback** asked for clarification regarding the Workers Compensation line item and the Legal Services line. The **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained the Workers Compensation line item and **Director Harran** explained the Legal Services line item.

### **PUBLIC WORKS**

**Director Jim Ryan** presented the budget for the Public Works department. **Council Member Sloane** clarified fuel costs. **Council Vice President Knowles** inquired about hydrants. A discussion pursued between the **Director of Public Works, Jim Ryan**, the **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski** and **Council Member Sloane** regarding fees for the hydrants. **Council Member Tokmajian** inquired about the Major Equipment line item. **Director Ryan** indicated it was for the purchase of a new pick-up truck for a replacement. **Council Vice President Knowles** inquired about the salt and if we were good for the season. **Director Ryan** indicated that a shipment had arrived before the last snowfall and we were good to go for the season.

### **STREET LIGHT**

**Director Jim Ryan** presented the budget for the Street Light department. **Council Member Tokmajian** inquired about the Major Equipment line item. **Director Ryan** indicated that it was for the purchase of a new dump truck. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about the Electricity – Street Lights line item. The **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained the rates in comparison to the newly installed lights versus the old street lights and other electrical statistics.

### **STATE HIGHWAY AID FUND**

**Director Jim Ryan** presented the budget for the State Highway Aid Fund. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about machinery. **Director Ryan** indicated that they were purchasing a bobcat and that he wanted the Public Works department to handle some of the blacktop work. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about the Miscellaneous line item. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski** explained the insurance reimbursements regarding traffic signals. **Council Member Tokmajian** inquired about the Major Equipment line item. **Director Ryan** explained that equipment was being replaced and not purchased in addition to the inventory that already exists. **Council Vice President Knowles** thanked **Director Ryan** and stated how the Public Works department has done so much more, with less, for the community.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION**

**Director Chuck McMullin** presented the budget for the Parks and Rec department. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about the Park Equipment Maintenance line item. **Director McMullin** explained the increase due to contracting out the maintenance of the grass cutting. A conversation ensued regarding grass cutting. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about the Growden Mansion line item. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained the expenses for Growden Mansion. **Council Vice President Knowles** stated that the interior of the mansion is in direr need of repair. **Council Member Tokmajian** inquired about the Programs line item.

**Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained what it cost to hire the talent and for running the shows.

#### **BUILDING AND PLANNING**

**Interim Director, Bob Heil**, presented the budget for the Building and Planning Department. **Council Member Sloane** inquired about Professional Services. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained this line in detail. **Council Vice President Knowles** asked **Interim Director Heil** the logistics of his company, Code Inspectors, which the township sub-contracts out to for inspections. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked for an explanation regarding the Redevelopment Initiatives line item. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained that it had to do with the Street Road Corridor Overlay and the redevelopment of the Riverfront.

#### **BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNTRY CLUB**

**Director of Operations for the Country Club, Jim Bogan**, presented the budget for the Country Club. **Council Member Sloane** asked why there wasn't a balance for the beginning of 2017. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski** explained, in detail, the revenue line and stated that moving forward there would be actual numbers listed. **Director of Operations Bogan** explained that it was one of the worst years ever for the country club due to the weather. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked for an explanation on Capital Outlay. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski** explained in detail the various leases and equipment needed for the Banquet Room and repaving of cart paths. **Council Secretary Kisselback** asked for an explanation regarding the Revenue line for Banquet: Food/Liquor. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, explained in detail how it is based on bookings and the economic increase on food and liquor costs. **Matt Galvin, President of Morning Star and Hospitality**, explained in detail the reasoning for the plateau in revenue in regards to the bookings of weddings, funerals, social events, township events and spoke on expansion to help with revenue. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked if the Country Club was concerned about next year in seeing a deficit. **Director of Operations Bogan** explained in detail the steady growth of the Bensalem Township Country Club throughout the ten years since the township has owned it. **Council Vice President Knowles** indicated that the township should have the Bensalem Township Country Club paid off in 8 years. **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, verified that statement along with an explanation of the workforce. **Council Secretary Kisselback** stated that the Country Club was a great investment.

## **FINANCE**

**John Chaykowski, Finance Manager**, was open to Council for any other questions regarding the proposed Budget for 2019 and reiterated the meeting prior with Council to explain the Budget in detail. **Council Member Sloane** asked the **Finance Manager, John Chaykowski**, to explain the Sinking Fund and the paying down of our debt service. **Council Vice President Knowles** asked about the cash value in the Trust Fund. The Finance Manager, John Chaykowski explained in detail how much was paid back into the fund and the status of the townships credit rating being one of the third highest, with Microsoft being first and Johnson and Johnson being second. **Council Member Sloane** asked how much was taken out of the Trust Fund and how much was paid back. **The Finance Manager, John Chaykowski** stated that 15 million was taken out and 1 million was paid back so far since 2017.

There was a very lengthy discussion amongst **Council**, the **Finance Manager**, along with the **Mayor**, regarding how many years it would take to pay back the loan along with interest. Other topics included investments, earned income tax, State Road issues, paving, future projects and so forth.

With the 2019 Proposed Budget review concluded, Council President Pilieri invited Public Comment on the Budget and the following people came forward:

**Steve Aldrich**, 1049 Morton Place, 47 year resident of Bensalem supports the Budget 100%. Thanked the Mayor and his support staff for a job well done.

**Oliver MacAlear**, 10B Dockside, Waterside spoke on the flooding issue along State Road that needed to be addressed by the Township.

**Tony Belfield**, 2475 Greenland Court, remarked on the Budget, Grants and the State Road flooding.

Seeing that no one else came forward, the Public Comment portion was closed and **Council President Pilieri** called for a vote. **Council Secretary Kisselback** put a motion on the floor to accept and approve the Budget as presented, **Council Vice President Knowles** seconded. **Council Member Sloane** read a statement into the record on behalf of himself and **Council Member Tokmajian**. **Solicitor Pizzo** remarked on the Amusement Tax and the PennDOT T.I.P. (Transportation Improvement Plan) program and how that works. The vote carried 3-2, to approve the 2019 Budget with **Council Member Sloane** and **Council Member Tokmajian** voting nay.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to conduct, **Council Member Tokmajian** motioned to adjourn, **Council Member Sloane** seconded.

The Bensalem Township Budget Council Meeting of December 4, 2018 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

[www.bensalempa.gov](http://www.bensalempa.gov)

or

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

Respectfully submitted,

Debora F. McBreen  
Recording Secretary/Council Clerk